



MASTER

Volunteer

Resource Guide



PREFACE

Master Volunteer is a program delivery method that when used, will have the potential to expand a county educational program with well-trained volunteers. This method of delivery can assist Extension agents in reaching new audiences.

The work of agents can be multiplied with the use of volunteers who meet the criteria for certification to work in the program, therefore allowing more clientele to be reached. If a county has a core of trained program volunteers, these volunteers would be supervised locally or by a neighboring county Extension professional.

Trained volunteers will gain the skills necessary to answer questions regarding the research base of information. County agents are currently using this information when conducting educational programs that support K-State Research & Extension. Volunteers will also enhance their skills in communication, demonstration, and the designated subject matter, while providing a higher quality of life for agents, volunteers and clientele.

Master Volunteer Resource Materials have been written by
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Topics covered in the Master Volunteer Resource Guide include:

Section 1 - Needs Assessment

Section 2 - Recruitment Plan

Section 3 - Effective Supervision

Section 4 - Master Volunteers Orientation & Training

The writers thank the following for their review and guidance of the Master Volunteer Resource Guide: Bob Neier, Sedgwick County; Phil Sell, Shawnee County and Nada Thoden, Johnson County. Reviewers analyzed completion of the steps for the development of Master Volunteers for program support; and appropriate information for application to a variety of subject matter programs.

The writers wish to recognize Susan Staggenborg, assistant editor, and Bob Holcombe, graphic designer, and their many hours of work on the project.

**The Master Volunteer Resource Guide for county Extension professionals is available
as a PDF file on the web.**



MASTER

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Section 1

Master Volunteer Concepts

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Section 1: Master Volunteer Concepts

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SECTION 1 - Master Volunteer Concepts

Goal: Understand and determine the concepts necessary for delivery of a Master Volunteer educational program.

Overview

Guidelines for assessing the need to implement a master volunteer delivery into a county program and its impact are outlined to provide a resource for success.

Understanding the concepts, definitions, and time requirements to establish and train master volunteers are key to the success of this type of program.

The Master Volunteer

Historically, K-State Research and Extension has extended its educational outreach to clientele through the use of volunteers. Volunteers provide diversity of contacts to targeted groups who might not be reached by traditional methods. Extension professionals can be assured of greater program visibility and positive image building activities through the use of volunteers.

The “Master Volunteer” is an outgrowth of the K-State Research and Extension’s tradition of utilizing volunteers. Master Volunteer is administered through the K-State Research and Extension and is managed by Extension professionals.

The “master” idea expands on the traditional volunteer role. Interested, dedicated individuals with some prior experience and knowledge in a specific area are selected and provided with intense, in-depth training. Upon the completion of training, there is a commitment by the volunteer to spend a specified amount of time sharing their enhanced expertise with others.

Master Volunteers can increase the depth and continuity of basic programs. Volunteers can gain self-satisfaction by expanding and sharing their knowledge of new subject matter with learners in a teaching situation. Beneficial support and pride is fostered by the contributions of volunteers as they improve the knowledge base of individuals in homes, businesses, and the community at large.

Why consider Master Volunteer? Master volunteers allow for a different method of program delivery and the potential to reach new and more diverse audiences. Master Volunteers, however, do not decrease the Extension professionals work load.

Needs Assessment

A Master Volunteer can be used to implement a wide range of educational activities useful to the community. Identifying the needs for Master Volunteer can be done with the following steps:

1. Assess the educational program needs.
2. Assess opportunities for volunteer involvement in educational program delivery.
3. Research to determine potential volunteers.
4. Determine the time needed for supervision and training.
5. Determine the cost of training.

(Refer to Needs Assessment Worksheets 1a, 1b and 1c.)

Definitions

The title “Master Volunteer” is to be used only by individuals trained to assist in educational program delivery for K-State Research and Extension.

Trainee - must attend the prescribed hours of instruction.

Certified Volunteer - has completed the required number of training hours and achieved the level of competency for acceptance.

Master Volunteer - has completed the required number of payback hours.

Master Volunteer Re-certified -

Re-certification is for the purpose of keeping current in the subject matter. A Master Volunteer who has completed the payback hours, additional approved hours, and an additional number of work the following year, volunteers may be re-certified as a K-State Research and Extension Master Volunteer.

Guidelines for Establishing Master Volunteers

Once the decision has been made to have Master Volunteers, guidelines need to be established for clear communication and continuity of the program. The following questions will help you get started:

- How many hours of training will trainees be required to complete?
- How will the competency level for certification be determined?
- How many hours of educational activities must a certified volunteer payback?
- How many hours of additional education must a Master Volunteer attend?
- What are the requirements for re-certification?
- How many hours of volunteer activities must a Master Volunteer work the following years?
- Are other educational opportunities related to the subject matter considered for re-certification?

Policies

A Master Volunteer should not display credentials or give the appearance of being a Master Volunteer at a place of business, unless designated as a program delivery site. (A Master Volunteer must not use the title “Master Volunteer” in any form of advertisement). Implying K-State Research and Extension’s endorsement of any product or place of business is inappropriate. Master Volunteer work is a public service that provides unbiased information, and the title “Master Volunteer,” is to be used only when doing unpaid volunteer work.

A Master Volunteer should not accept any money for speaking before groups. Unsolicited reimbursements can be donated to a local Master Volunteer fund.

Miles driven while serving as a Master Volunteer may qualify as an income tax deduction. Check with your income tax preparer for accurate information as it applies to your individual situation.

A Master Volunteer MUST:

- Establish and maintain a professional level of conduct.
- Refrain from exaggerated, unwarranted claims or comments.
- Maintain client confidentiality.
- Provide information, not advice, leaving the final decision up to the client.
- Share methods and literature recommended by K-State Research and Extension.

They must NOT:

- Promote personal interests, business products or services.
- Give legal advice.
- Accept any payment for services.
- Recommend, “Well K-State says...but the way I do it is...”

Volunteer Management

K-State Research and Extension has policies that include approved practices for recruiting, training and supervising salaried and volunteer staff; a code of conduct for salaried and volunteer relationships with children; reporting procedures for incidents when they do occur; and a responsibility to parents.

All volunteers for K-State Research and Extension must complete and submit the Information Profile and update annually. For additional information refer to “Volunteer Information Profile,” 4-H 667, a component of a Volunteer Management System.

Education and experience gained by participation may be included as qualifications when seeking employment.

Legal Issues

The Kansas Extension Service Administrative Handbook addresses issues of volunteer liability in Chapter 1, Legislation and Policies.

Training

Adequate training is essential to the success of the Master Volunteer in program delivery. The outline that follows is an example of pre-planning training schedule.

One Year Before Training

- Determine the needs of your office. Do a needs assessment considering possible jobs, number of volunteers needed, hours of work available, resources and facilities for volunteers to do these jobs.
- Determine the community's interest in the Master Volunteer delivery method. Begin discussion with Extension boards, program development committees and individuals who have been particularly interested in the focus programs you are considering for delivery by Master Volunteers.
- Develop a plan. What are the minimum and maximum number required for training? Will neighboring counties be included? How many hours of training are required?
- Review potential subject matter resources for the areas of need. Determine how participants will be evaluated for competency of the subject matter they will be responsible for.
- Determine the criteria necessary for re-certification.

Within Six Months Before Training

- Notify all applicants of their acceptance or rejection for training.
- Notify participants of the training schedule. Send them a copy of the program with directions on where the meeting will be held, location directions, etc.
- Confirm/remind instructors of their commitment to training.
- Prepare name tags and table tents for training sessions.
- Prepare the pretest and post-test over subject matter and the organization.

First Week of Training

- Pretest over subject matter, record scores.
- Handout curriculum materials for subject matter.
- Acquaint participants with work environment.
- Acquaint participants with each other.

Two to Three Weeks Before Training Ends

- Order volunteer name tags.
- Print certificates for completion of training.

Final Training Session

- Administer post-test over subject matter, record scores.
- Distribute certificates for completion of training.
- Conduct evaluations of training process.
- Make plans to meet with the new Master Volunteers; announce a meeting date.

Evaluation

It is important to build an evaluation into your plan. At some point you will be able to look back at your objectives and determine if they have been met. You also need to have several checkpoints where you ask yourself if things are going according to plan. Building a time line for evaluations will provide opportunities to check on your progress. Be prepared to make changes in your plan based on what you learn from the evaluation.

Early in the planning stage decide WHAT you want to collect information about. This will be the first step to decide how you will collect information, the success of the current program, changes for future program delivery and the impact of Master Volunteer on the educational program outcomes.

Another aspect of evaluation is to determine whether or not to implement the Master Volunteer program as a delivery method for Extension educational programs.

Why Are Master Volunteers Needed?

You may have a long list of things you would like to do, if only time, resources and expertise were available. It is important to identify the needs for using a Master Volunteer program.

Begin by developing a list of your program needs. Keep in mind the program needs, community and individual needs.

Examples:

There is a well established base of clientele. With the current availability of positions in the county we are unable to address some issues where we could make a noticeable impact.

We have a strong program but are not reaching some of the audience that would benefit from our educational delivery. Perhaps more could be reached if we had additional staff for delivery.

Time is limited for additional program delivery, however, if several volunteers could be trained to assist in program delivery more clientele could be reached.

Begin your list:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

When you have completed your list continue to Needs Assessment 1b "Is the Master Volunteer delivery method appropriate for my educational program?"

Is the Master Volunteer Delivery Method Appropriate for My Educational Program?

The Master Volunteer delivery method is not always feasible or appropriate and should be weighed carefully before proceeding. Below are some factors which might affect the decision to proceed:

	Yes	No
1. Is there a clearly defined need for Master Volunteers to assist in educational program delivery? (Refer to: Needs Assessment Worksheet 1a, "Why are Master Volunteers Needed?")		
2. Can the responsibilities and tasks identified for a Master Volunteer and paid employees be clearly defined?		
3. Can the responsibilities and tasks identified for a Master Volunteer survive the potential turnover in volunteers?		
4. Can the extension agents contribute additional time to handle the task of supervision and training of volunteers?		
5. Are adequate educational resources available for use by Master Volunteer to represent K-State Research & Extension?		
6. Will the paid employees be supportive of the role of a Master Volunteer?		
7. Will the existing budget allow for this delivery method. (Refer to Needs Assessment Worksheet c, "Determining the Costs.")		
8.		
9.		

After reviewing and assessing the answers to the above questions how will you proceed?

Continue with plans for Master Volunteer delivery method is apparent. There may be
 _____ unexpected issues to deal with, but we are ready to proceed.

Or...

If some modifications can be made to address concerns identified we will make those
 adjustments and use the Master Volunteer delivery method.
Make a list of those modifications, how changes will be made, and a time frame for
 _____ *accomplishing them. You may choose to add to the worksheet above.*

Or...

Major modifications would be needed. We are unable to accommodate the Master Volunteer
 _____ delivery method at this time. Will explore other solutions to meet the needs identified.

Determining the Cost

The following chart identifies some possible expenses that could be incurred with program delivery through Master Volunteer. Use or modify this list to meet your own identified needs.

<i>Identified Needs</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>
Recruitment	
Advertising	
Interviewing	
Training	
Resources	
Volunteer Screening Check	
Name Tags	
Notebooks	
Certificates of Completion	
Duplication	
Support	
Official Name Tags	
Update Resources	
New Resources	
Teaching Supplies	
Demonstration Equipment	
Work Location	



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Section 2

Recruitment and Selection Plan

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Section 2: Recruitment and Selection Plan

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Section 2 - Recruitment and Selection Plan

Goal: Prepare and implement a plan to identify and recruit Master Volunteers.

Overview

After the needs assessment is complete, a plan needs to be in place for establishing and supporting the delivery of programs for master volunteers. The next step in establishing a master volunteer program is developing a recruitment plan.

The recruitment plan will include a list of job responsibilities, as well as a system to recruit, screen, interview, and select volunteers for certification training.

Getting Prepared

Have your county's educational plan in mind as you prepare to recruit and market the program that Master Volunteers will be delivering. During the recruitment process, it is important for volunteers to assess what they are qualified to do. This will help in the eventual placement of volunteers.

There are many ways to recruit volunteers. Do not concentrate all your efforts on one activity. For example, news and press releases are but one way to recruit. Paid advertisements, company newsletters, word-of-mouth, friends of existing clientele and current program volunteers are all important avenues of recruitment.

To clarify the purpose of volunteer services, ensure smooth program operation and provide a gauge for the measurement of progress, planners should develop carefully written statements.

Every volunteer service program has goals. Sometimes written statements of goals have not been developed. Consequently, goals are vaguely or incorrectly perceived, resulting in a lack of clearly defined volunteer program focus.

Goals are reached through objectives. Activities are planned to achieve objectives. The following example illustrates these relationships and explains the differences.

Example:

Goal: To develop and implement a mechanism for expanding the capabilities of the K-State Research and Extension to disseminate information and skills to individuals and groups through Extension Master Volunteer involvement.

Objective: To recruit, screen, train and assign 20 Master Volunteers to fill the identified positions by June 30 of each year.

Activity: To arrange meetings with six local service organizations during October and November of the current year for the purpose of recruiting volunteers.

Elements of Goals

1. Goals need to be consistent with the identified needs of the client, agency and community. Goals that are not responsive to the problem or are not consistent with the Extension mission and program, lead to failure. The appropriateness of goal statements must be the planner's top priority.
2. Goals are written and prioritized. To make sure the purpose of the Master Volunteer service is clear and to avoid vagueness, goals should be stated in print. By listing goals in order of decreasing importance or significance, goal priorities are immediately evident.

What Type of People Volunteer?

We already know that Master Volunteers have a strong interest in their subject of expertise. They also need to have enough free time to commit themselves to the training and volunteer hours. What brings Master Volunteers to the program and what do they want from it? To answer these questions it is necessary to look at human motivation and how it applies to the work of volunteers.

Each of us has various levels of need. We satisfy one need level, then we move up to the next. The most basic needs are: physical life elements including food, water and air. The second need is a feeling of safety and security. Thirdly, a social need of wanting to be liked and enjoying the closeness of others. The fourth need includes recognition as someone of value. The last need is self-actualization, which means doing what one is best suited to do.

This helps us understand why unemployed or low-income individuals are not interested in becoming volunteers even though they may have time to do the work. In fact, volunteers are people who have probably satisfied the first three levels of need and are seeking to build esteem or reach self-actualization. These needs are more complex than those they have already fulfilled on their own. The Master Volunteer needs to make an effort to satisfy those needs with appropriate jobs. This is why it is important to have real jobs for the Master Volunteer and not mere time-fillers. Since they are not paid, the satisfaction from a job well done and worth doing is essential.

What Works in Recruiting Master Volunteers?

Being asked by someone personally to volunteer is very effective in the recruitment of volunteers. Having a friend or family member already involved or being individually approached through a group or organization they are active with, and a self-need for involvement in a volunteer activity are all effective forms of volunteer recruitment. The following are some creative ways to recruit volunteers:

- Pool ideas of salaried staff and volunteers on recruitment possibilities. The name drain!
- Have current volunteers bring a friend. Share success stories enthusiastically.
- Create awareness through attractive materials, and creative use of media.
- Let others know through community organizations. Recognize current program volunteers.
- Mail preference questionnaires to past clients and community newcomers.
- Look in places where people gather and who share common interests.
- Offer hours for community service or to enhance high school and college credit.
- Remember not to rule out the most obvious. Let them make the choice to apply.

Volunteer Motivation

It helps to place the right person in the right job. Work motives are often related to three needs: achievement, power and affiliation. These motives display themselves in our behavior and can be identified by the observant manager so that appropriate jobs are supplied to meet these needs.

Achievement-Motivated individual's set a goal to succeed in a situation that requires excellent or improved performance. Achievement-motivated people need to work alone and enjoy the freedom of guiding their own work and setting their own goals. They consistently produce work of high quality and accomplish what they set out to do. They challenge themselves, but do not set out to do the impossible. The achiever often will show signs of strong organizational ability, a willingness to complete a job without further supervision, and a desire for feedback on job performance.

Power-Motivated individuals want to influence others. They are concerned about their position and reputation. These people are free with advice and want to see others follow their direction. Their personalities are usually aggressive, and they are often outspoken. The power-motivated individual will lean toward structures that are quite organized. They have a carefully spelled out organizational power structure and a high regard for status and prestige within the organization. This person is likely to be assertive (if not aggressive) in behavior and will try to gain power through leadership and/or persuasive tactics.

Affiliation-Motivated individuals need to be with other people who enjoy their company. These people are friendly and caring. They want to be liked. They work best with other workers rather than alone, and they prefer management to be friendly rather than authoritative. The affiliation-motivated person will exhibit an open, friendly manner, deep concern for people as individuals, and a need to work within a group. A need to have personal relationships with other workers and supervisors characterize this volunteer.

Placement Satisfaction

Considering that after they receive the training, which they value highly, the work is all the program has to offer the Master Volunteer. Good job placement is very important. If the work satisfies these volunteers, they will be an asset to the program and will continue to work.

Sometimes little thought has gone into the design of the job responsibilities for Master Volunteers. It may be clear from the number of phone calls to the office requesting information about the program that it will be useful. These Masters Volunteers are quickly trained and sent to the phones. Unfortunately, this not only wastes the diverse talents of the volunteers, but also neglects the development of innovative projects for the community. Fortunately, these restrictions are usually quite clear and program development soon begins. Master Volunteers stay late to discuss details. Latest findings can lead to the

establishment of a speakers' bureau, which in turn, leads to specialization on the part of the subject/skill experts. There are talented amateurs, and amateurs can be as good or better than professionals; they simply do not make a living from their knowledge.

In order to successfully place the volunteers in the most suitable positions you must get to know them. The application forms can be designed to begin this process. Promoting active participation from the beginning is also helpful. There are small assignments that clearly need to be done at the very first training session. Assigning new Master Volunteers to set up audiovisual equipment, distribute handouts and call the group back from a break encourages participation. These first jobs might be handled through a volunteer system. By taking an active part, no matter how small, trainees will learn their role is not a passive one. As training progresses, the Extension professional will have ample time to get to know the volunteers thoroughly, especially if there is some time before or after sessions for socializing.

Matching Responsibilities

It is difficult to list specific types of responsibilities best suited for each personality due to the vast skills and talents of each person. One tool that may help determine job responsibility is a Volunteer Functions Inventory. This assists the potential volunteer in understanding their reasons for volunteering, as well as assisting the Extension professional in matching responsibilities to volunteer needs. (Volunteer Function Inventory may be found in Section 4.)

As program manager, the Extension professional must consider talents, skills, motives and personalities when matching the jobs with different individuals.

Making Job Adjustments

In designing and redesigning the job responsibilities, the Extension professional must assess the jobs to be completed to determine their motivational content. If no one repeatedly wants to do a certain job, there is probably something wrong with that job. It must be kept in mind that the job itself is the reward for the volunteer. There is no payment, no vacation or hospitalization time, there may not even be a parking space.

Jobs can be changed by enlarging, enriching or simplification. A job is enlarged by increasing the number and variety of tasks done — two or three meaningless tasks do not equal a single meaningful one. Job enrichment refers to delegating functions that have been thought of as strictly managerial. Including the worker in the planning and evaluation process helps to enrich the job experience. Job enrichment can occur at any level of responsibility. Simplification involves combining or eliminating some tasks — look for those tasks that appear to be busy work, and get rid of them first.

What to Include in the Job Responsibilities of a Master Volunteer

Job Title: Important because it adds dignity to any job.

Time Requirements: What training time is required and length of the volunteer time required in giving back to the program? Give dates if possible. Indicate specific days/hours, or flexible schedule; list times, if relevant.

Site of Volunteering: Where will volunteering take place, at a public event or activity. Also include the office address and phone number.

Extension Professional in Charge: Title, address, phone, fax, e-mail, program home page.

Position Responsibilities: Include the purpose of the job and its relationship to the overall program. List the duties of the job and special requirement, such as confidentiality, collaboration, voice and travel.

Skills and Education: Since training will be in the subject matter only, previous knowledge is necessary to be a Master Volunteer. If there is a minimum age or driver's license required, indicate those requirements.

Training: List the type of training you will offer and the style in which it will be presented. Spell out all the training that must be completed before the Master Volunteer is assigned a program responsibility.

Tools: If you expect volunteers to use tools or equipment for their volunteer job, list them and any special knowledge or ability required, such as computer equipment or program knowledge.

Cost: Is there a cost to the Master Volunteer for the materials, lodging, travel and conference registration?

Liabilities: These can include valid driver's license, access to reliable transportation or phone accessibility requirements.

Screening Applicants

Because an organization is made up of people, it is full of surprises. Similar to dealing with the weather — you have to take what you get. Screening processes for volunteer programs are encouraged. People should not be admitted to the program unless suitable.

Each year the group of trainees will be different. One year may find many extroverts who are aggressive in running public programs. The next year may be filled with quieter types. Nearly all programs using Master Volunteers experience a veteran return, with volunteers who have already completed their commitment coming back year after year. These people give a continuity and stability to the organization that can be reassuring to new trainees.

Some Extension professionals may feel uncomfortable using a screening process because of the Extension philosophy of being open to everyone. However, these people will become employees who serve the clients who should not be turned away. By choosing the best applicants, you ensure the best service for the consumer.

Many programs using Master Volunteers have too many applicants due to the popularity of the program and are compelled to screen applicants. There are a variety of ways to go about screening. Person-to-person interviews are good. In some programs former Master Volunteers are involved with the process. Application forms with appropriate questions are another method used. It is good to design the questions so that the applicant reveals his or her personality, interest and abilities instead of giving the answers they think are wanted.

Examples of job responsibilities, applications, volunteer inventory, interview materials, publicity, letters of acceptance and rejection are provided to assist you.

Master Volunteer Key Concepts

Master Volunteers are employees who are not paid. Job satisfaction and recognition is often the only payment. They must be:

- **hired (accepted into the program),**
- **trained (in subject information as well as program orientation),**
- **welcomed into the work place (assigned a place to work, and office procedures explained).**

It is important not to neglect the working conditions of the volunteers. These include desk space, available phone, clerical and computer equipment and a coat rack. Conditions should also include policy and administration, supervision and relationships with paid staff. Policies and administration of the K-State Research and Extension should be explained to the volunteers before they begin working. Working conditions are often overlooked when dealing with volunteers. The old attitude of “they’re worth what we pay them” tends to reign in some offices and volunteers must work wherever they can find space. Master Volunteers are valuable employees, they deserve proper work space and appropriate recognition.

The program using a Master Volunteer has proven beneficial to K-State Research and Extension offices again and again. Good management practices have been an important factor — good volunteers should be treated as valuable people. This can be done by paying attention to their needs, as well as the quality of work they are asked to perform.

Job Responsibility for (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer

Job Title: _____

Time Requirements: _____

Site of Volunteering: _____

Extension Professional in Charge: _____

Position Responsibilities: _____

Skills and Education: _____

Training: _____

Tools: _____

Cost: _____

Liabilities: _____

How to Write a Media Release

Date:_____

Title:_____

Contact Person: _____ Phone Number:_____

Other fax and/or e-mail:_____

Release Date: _____ Kill Date: _____

Title or Headline:_____

What:_____

When:_____

Where:_____

Details:_____

Cost:_____

-30-

Notes:

- *Use letterhead and keep a file copy.*
- *Always double space.*
- *The information included in your press release can be presented in the form of a list or an article. However, if you write an article, put the basics in the first paragraph. Often, in the editing process, the last paragraph or two will be cut. If you list your vital information last, it may be left on the newsroom floor.*
- *The “-30-” indicates the end of the press release. If you continue on to a second page, you should put “MORE” at the bottom of the first page and “Page 2” on the bottom of the following page.*
- *Be precise in giving addresses, telephone numbers and dates.*
- *Double check all details.*
 - *County letterhead*
 - *Return address*

(Subject Matter) Master Volunteer Application

I wish to become a (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer in (County/District). I want to be accepted into the (? hours) (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer training program offered by the (State? Area? Group of Counties?) for the Kansas State University Research and Extension. I understand that in exchange for the training, I will volunteer at least (? hours) of my time to the (Subject Matter) as a Certified Volunteer within the next year. I understand that I will become a (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer when I complete the training, examination and volunteer hours.

Name (print) _____ Date of application _____

Name (signature) _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ Phone (evening) _____ e-mail _____

Please complete the following:

Years of (Subject Matter) experience _____

Types of (Subject Matter) experience and related training _____

List areas of specialities or hobbies related to (Subject Matter) _____

List experiences in working with the community, schools, churches, youth, senior citizens, etc.

Please list group affiliations related to (Subject Matter) _____

How did you learn of the (subject matter) Master Volunteer position? _____

Why did you want to become a (subject matter) Master Volunteer? _____

The (subject matter) Master Volunteer training will be held on (day of week, dates, location and times). A (\$) registration fee will cover all meals and supplies.

Comments:

Return Application To: (Name and complete address and due date)

(This form would have space to write interview responses and guide interview)

File for documentation

Working Document- 2c

(Subject Matter) Master Volunteer Interview Questions

Name of Applicant _____

First, do you have any questions to ask me about the (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer certification, K-State Research and Extension, or staff responsible for the program?

1. Tell me a little about your (Subject Matter) related experience and interest:
2. Why did you select this particular volunteer program to become involved in?
3. What do you hope to get out of the program?
4. What can you tell me about yourself that demonstrates your desire or ability to fulfill the training and volunteer commitment?
5. How involved do you feel you can, or want to become, in the (Subject Matter) as a Master Volunteer? (Do you see this as more than a one time, one-year program involvement?)
6. What kind of conflict might you have between your philosophy, ideology or commercial interests and that of Kansas State University or the program? (Direct this question especially to people making their living working in the area they will be volunteering.)
7. Will you be available during our busiest months? (List time when proposed class etc. will need their volunteer hours)?
8. How much time could you devote as a (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer each month?
9. The volunteer commitment is (? hours). Do you think this is too little, too much, just right?
10. Do you feel comfortable talking with people over the phone, in person, in groups (large or small), through mass media?
11. Are there any volunteer projects you would feel uncomfortable doing?
12. Do you have any special skills useful as a (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer? (Art ability, writing, photography, computer, etc.)
13. Are you willing to try something you have not done before?
14. Why do you think you should be selected for the program over the other applicants?
15. Do you have anything else to add?

(Form would be formatted with lines and space)

File for documentation

Working Document- 2d

(Subject Matter) Master Volunteer Evaluation Form

Your assessment and impressions of this applicant - to be filled out immediately after the interview.

Name of Applicants _____

Suitability for the program (check one)

☐ Outstanding

☐ Very Good

☐ Good

☐ Fair

☐ Poor

Use the following categories as guidelines to record your impressions:

Personality (enthusiastic, outgoing, reserved)

Ability to Communicate Well

Honesty, Integrity

Ability to Work With Others, Follow through with instructions

Any Potential Problems

Other Comments

Ethnic or Minority Affiliation (Do not ask this question; make your own judgement.)

☐ Asian

☐ Black

☐ Hispanic

☐ American Indian

☐ Handicapped-
disability

Interviewed and Evaluated by _____ Interview date _____

File for documentation

Working Document- 2e

(County letterhead)

Dear:

Thank you for submitting your application for a (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer. Response to the program was so enthusiastic that we have had to limit enrollment. Your application indicated that you are certainly qualified for the program; however, the class was filled when we received your application. Your name has been placed on a waiting list, and you will be notified of future (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer training opportunities.

We appreciate your interest in the program and hope to see you in a future (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer class. If you have any questions, please call.

Sincerely,

Extension Professional name and title

Note on Letters of Rejection:

Sometimes a Master Volunteer application process is so successful that there is simply not enough space to accept all the applicants or there are not enough volunteer jobs to be done. Letters MUST be sent to those who have not been accepted due to class size or other reasons. Remember, you and hopefully a screening committee will make decisions on the criteria set in the application process. Even careful screening an unsuitable applicant might enter the program.

File for documentation

Working Document- 2f



MASTER *Volunteer*

Section 3

Effective Supervision

MASTER *Volunteer*

Section 3: Effective Supervision

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Section 3 - Effective Supervision

Goal: Apply principles of effective supervision, recognition and program evaluation.

Overview

While management of the program is most important, the greatest concern about starting and continuing a program supported with Master Volunteers seems to be the supervision.

Master Volunteers are partners who are helping to accomplish the organization's mission. A supervisor should effectively interact with volunteers and give them attention, support, direction, recognition and professional respect.

Characteristics of An Effective Supervisor

A study done by the University of Wisconsin found that the supervisors who are most effective:

- show enthusiasm
- present volunteer activities positively
- respect volunteers as individuals
- are friendly
- remember that volunteers work within limits of life situations

Conversely, supervisors who are least effective:

- try to do it all themselves
- are disorganized
- are not easy to contact
- are not open to other ideas
- lack focus — try to do too many things

The following are some hints for effectively supervising Master Volunteers:

- Listen closely to volunteers. Are they satisfied, discontent, bored?
- Expect high-quality work from volunteers. They should be considered non-salaried staff.
- Develop the right kind of praise for a job well done. Be creative and do not be patronizing.
- Be flexible.
- Always be tactful and considerate.
- Be available to the volunteer. It says, "You are important."
- Make sure your leadership style is not dictatorial.
- Expect high-quality work and reward it.
- Be open to changes. Remember to be flexible.
- Do not be afraid to ask for help and input. It builds a team.
- Know your volunteers.
- Make decisions.
- Deal with conflict. Have a system in place that accomplishes this quickly.
- Develop and maintain an appropriate sense of humor.

Motivating Master Volunteers

An important part of the supervisor's responsibility is to supply motivation. In order to effectively motivate volunteers, consider their reasons for volunteering. Are they volunteering to meet needs of achievement, power or affiliation? Try to match your motivation efforts to their reason for volunteering.

In a recent research study to identify and describe the motivational factors of Master Volunteers in Ohio State University Extension programs, Marjorie Wolford made the following implications for Master Volunteer Programs:

- Volunteers want to learn new things and be affiliated with the organization and the people in the program.
- Master Volunteers could be catalysts for new recruits and share positive experiences in training programs.
- Frequent communication and feedback by Extension professionals is important for satisfying affiliation motives (concerned about their relationship with others) and recruitment of future volunteers.
- Volunteer supervisors should devote more attention to achievement (pride in accomplishments and a desire for excellence) and affiliation needs rather than creating positions of power (desire for control and influence) for Master Volunteers.

Here are some additional ideas for keeping volunteers motivated:

- Provide a wide variety of volunteer responsibilities and roles. Match the role with the volunteer who has the skills to successfully complete the responsibility. Provide opportunities for volunteers to develop new skills.
- Involve volunteers in meaningful responsibilities that allow for continuous learning and growth. Volunteers want to learn new things.

- Identify the volunteer as a member of the organization. A volunteer wants to be affiliated with the organization and the people in the program. Each volunteer should have an ID card, lapel pin or other agency identification such as shirts and hats.
- Include volunteers in meaningful decision making for the organization. By participating in decisions about the direction a program should take, volunteers will develop a stronger affiliation with the organization.
- Provide opportunities for experienced volunteers to transition to new roles with increased responsibility and status as volunteers, such as head volunteer, volunteer advisory board, etc.
- Recognize, Recognize, Recognize.
- Utilize experienced volunteers as catalysts for finding new recruits; they can share positive experiences.
- Communicate frequently and provide volunteers feedback about the value of volunteers in an organization. Their contribution is important to the organization.

Record Keeping

A system of record keeping is vital to a Master Volunteer Program. Record-keeping systems may range from what is kept in a coordinator's memory to a fully computerized system. Even a simple system will yield information that can be put to good use. The annual report on your organization's activities will strengthen your message when you cite statistics. Volunteer recognition, awards and performance reviews could rely on records rather than on recollections. For tax deductions of in-kind contributions and for documentation regarding insurance coverage, a record-keeping system can be most helpful.

When considering the system to create, make sure it fits with the program's and the volunteer's needs. Be sure the system is practical and contains the information that is needed.

A number of record-keeping forms in this section are provided for use to conduct a Master Volunteer Program. Please consult the Master Volunteer Orientation and Training Guide. (Section 4)

Recognition

Recognition of Master Volunteers is a way to show that your organization values volunteer support and provides the motivation for a continuing commitment from your volunteers. Make recognition a habit and be generous in giving it — publicly and privately. It should not be a one-time thing, and you should not wait for an annual volunteer recognition reception to say “Thank-You.” Recognition can be as simple as welcoming them with a pleasant word, acknowledging them with a smile or writing a thank you at the end of a completed task.

While many volunteers truly appreciate the certificates, pins and luncheons, there are others who would appreciate another form of recognition. Be creative in the ways you recognize volunteers. We tend to use only one or two ways to recognize volunteers. Volunteers differ in the kinds of recognition they need and the amount, so use a variety of methods. Here are some ideas:

- Give personal praise.
- Write letters and postcards of thanks— informal certificates of appreciation.
- Ask for their advice.
- Include them in the stages of planning.
- Provide them with identification pins, buttons or T-shirts.
- Recognize with a special contribution in the newspaper, on a bulletin board or in a staff meeting.
- Assign more complex assignments.
- Nominate for special awards.
- Promote to new volunteer positions.
- Provide opportunities to travel to specialized training activities.

The secret to effectively recognizing volunteers is “Be Creative” and “Do It Often.”

Measuring the Impact

Measuring the impact of the Master Volunteer program is an important tool for determining success and making improvements. It also provides evidence that the program is valuable to the volunteer, to the organization and to the clients and customers. Evaluation should be an ongoing process.

Determine the type of evaluation necessary. Consider the needs assessment you completed before starting to use Master Volunteers in the program. What are your goals for developing a program supported by Master Volunteers? The answers to these questions will help you determine the type of evaluation.

Measuring the Impact on the Volunteer

Assessing the impact of the program on the volunteer can be accomplished in a variety of ways from formal to informal. For example, formal surveys could be distributed to every volunteer; a portion of volunteers could be invited to provide feedback in a group setting; or the volunteer supervisor could sit down with one volunteer at a time. Regardless of the method, consider asking the following questions in regard to the particular subject matter content of your Extension volunteer program:

- What was your greatest success this year?
- What new knowledge, techniques or skills did you learn?
- How did you feel about the event or the year?
- What resources or training might you need in the future?
- Are you uncomfortable with any parts of this role?
- How have you changed as a result of your volunteer role?

If a volunteer has been less productive than expected or is unsatisfied in the volunteer role, consider some of these possible reasons for low volunteer productivity:

- Boredom: too much routine.
- Discontent: personality differences.
- Idleness: fluctuating workload, inefficient staffing structure.
- Lack of interest in the work.
- Ill-defined or ill-matched assignments.
- Inadequate supervision.
- Misunderstanding of policies and their purposes.
- Resentment, overload or unrealistic deadlines.
- Poor communication within work team.
- Emotional stress and personal difficulties.

Corrective action may be necessary to increase volunteer productivity and could include: additional training or re-assignment of a volunteer to a new position. In extreme situations, suspension or dismissal of the volunteer may be necessary.

Many volunteer programs have developed policies for suspension and dismissal of volunteers. It is important that policies are developed that outline the causes for suspension/dismissal and a procedure is in place for the volunteer to respond. No volunteer should be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible

dismissal with supervisory staff.

Measuring the Outputs for Volunteer Contributions to Extension

Supervisors need to show how Master Volunteers contribute to the organization through their service to the customer. In most cases, this is accomplished by measuring outputs (number of customers served, number of hours contributed, number of public presentations made, etc). Much of this information can be gathered through the reporting mechanisms required for Master Volunteers to complete.

Measuring the Impact of the Program for its Value to the Customer

Increasingly, organizations are asked to measure programs for their outcome — what changes customers make as a result of the information and education provided.

The United Way of America provides an excellent overview of outcome-based evaluation. The following items provide a brief summary of the general steps to accomplish an outcome-based evaluation:

1. Identify the major outcome that you want to examine or verify. Reflect on the mission of the program and ask what impacts customers might have as they participate in the program.
2. Choose the outcome(s) you want to examine.
3. For each outcome, specify what observable measures or indicators will suggest that you're achieving those outcomes with your customers.
4. Specify a "target" goal of clients achieving specific outcomes.
5. Identify what information is needed to show these indicators.
6. Decide how that information can be efficiently and realistically gathered.
7. Analyze and report the findings.

100 Ways to Recognize Volunteers

1. Smile 2. Put up a suggestion box. 3. Treat to a soda. 4. Reimburse assignment related expenses. 5. Ask for a report. 6. Send a birthday card. 7. Arrange for discounts. 8. Give service stripes. 9. Maintain a coffee bar. 10. Plan annual ceremonial occasions. 11. Invite to staff meetings. 12. Recognize personal needs and problems. 13. Accommodate personal needs and problems. 14. Be pleasant. 15. Use in an emergency situation. 16. Provide a baby sitter. 17. Post Honor Roll in reception area. 18. Respect their wishes. 19. Give informal teas. 20. Keep challenging them. 21. Send a Thanksgiving Day card to volunteer's family. 22. Provide a nursery. 23. Say "Good Morning." 24. Greet by name. 25. Provide a good pre-service training. 26. Help develop self-confidence. 27. Award plaques to sponsoring group. 28. Take time to explain. 29. Be verbal. 30. Motivate agency VIP's to converse with them. 31. Hold rap sessions. 32. Give additional responsibility. 33. Afford participation in team planning. 34. Respect sensitivities. 35. Enable to grow on the responsibility. 36. Enable to grow out of the responsibility. 37. Send newsworthy information to the media. 38. Have beverage and cheese tasting parties. 39. Ask client to evaluate their work-service. 40. Say "Good Afternoon." 41. Honor their preferences. 42. Create pleasant surroundings. 43. Welcome to staff at break times. 44. Enlist to train other volunteers. 45. Have a public reception. 46. Take time to talk. 47. Defend against hostile or negative staff. 48. Make good plans. 49. Commend to supervisory staff. 50. Send a valentine. 51. Make thorough pre-arrangements. 52. Persuade "personnel" to equate volunteer experience with work experience. 53. Admit to partnership with paid staff. 54. Recommend to perspective employer. 55. Provide scholarships to volunteer conferences or workshops. 56. Offer advocacy roles. 57. Utilize as consultants. 58. Write thank you notes. 59. Invite participation in policy formulation. 60. Surprise with coffee and cake. 61. Celebrate outstanding projects and achievements. 62. Nominate for volunteer awards. 63. Have a "Leadership Day" for leaders of sponsoring groups. 64. Carefully match volunteer with responsibility. 65. Praise them to their friends. 66. Provide substantive in-service training. 67. Provide useful tools in good working condition. 68. Say "Good Night." 69. Plan staff and volunteer social events. 70. Be a real person. 71. Rent billboard space for public recognition. 72. Accept their individuality. 73. Provide opportunities for conferences and evaluation. 74. Identify age groups. 75. Maintain meaningful file. 76. Send impromptu fun cards. 77. Ask for input and listen to the response. 78. Instigate client planned surprises. 79. Utilize purchased newspaper space. 80. Promote a "Volunteer of the Month" program. 81. Send letter of appreciation to employer. 82. Plan a "Recognition Edition" of the agency newsletter. 83. Color code name tags to indicate particular achievements (hours, years, unit, etc.) 84. Send commendatory letters to prominent public figures. 85. Say "We missed you." 86. Praise the sponsoring group or club. 87. Promote staff smiles. 88. Facilitate personal maturation. 89. Distinguish between groups and individuals in the group. 90. Maintain safe working conditions. 91. Adequate orientation. 92. Award special citations for extraordinary achievements. 93. Fully indoctrinate regarding the agency. 94. Send greeting cards. 95. Be familiar with the details of assignments. 96. Conduct community-wide cooperative, inter-agency recognition events. 97. Plan a theater party. 98. Attend a sports event. 99. Have a picnic. 100. Say "Thank You."

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

It is the policy of Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service that all persons shall have equal opportunity and access to its educational programs, services, activities, and materials without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability. Kansas State University is an equal opportunity organization. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, Marc A. Johnson, Director.

TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers may deduct out-of-pocket expenses while doing volunteer work for certain groups approved by the Internal Revenue Service.

Types of expenditures that volunteers may deduct:

- direct gifts of money or property to qualified organizations
- automobile mileage and expenses
- bus and cab transportation expenses
- parking and tolls
- special uniforms
- telephone bills
- entertainment and meals given to others
- costs of meals and lodging, if away overnight
- travel expenses above per diem paid
- tickets to charity benefits, above intrinsic value
- dues, fees or assessments made to qualified organization

The following are not tax-deductible:

- value of volunteer time donated
- dependent care expenses
- volunteer's own meals (unless away from home overnight)
- volunteer's own entertainment

Automobile-related expenses may be deducted either at the standard mileage rate or an actual expenses basis (contact IRS office for changes).

Items for which a volunteer received reimbursement may be deducted only to the extent that actual expense exceeds amount of compensation.

A complete description of federal tax deductions for volunteers can be obtained from your local IRS office. Ask for Publication #526, Charitable Contributions or on the Web at: www.irs.ustreas.gov

Note: Regulations for tax deductions for volunteers change annually. This is only a guide. Volunteers should contact knowledgeable sources each year to determine changes.

Volunteer Service Log

Name of Organization,
Agency, or Group

Name
of Volunteer

Date	JOB TITLE Description of Job Performance	Hours Spent	Total Milage	OTHER EXPENSES Description/Amount

Volunteer In-Kind Contributions

	Number of Hours Spent	Number of People Reached
Getting Background Information		
a. research	_____	_____
b. supplemental reading	_____	_____
c. receiving training	_____	_____
d. others (specify)	_____	_____
Public Contacts		
a. training others	_____	_____
b. letter writing	_____	_____
c. phone calls	_____	_____
d. program publicity	_____	_____
e. meeting with people (individuals, groups)	_____	_____
f. others (specify)	_____	_____
Miscellaneous		
a. state board meetings	_____	_____
b. planning meetings	_____	_____
c. training team activities	_____	_____
d. driving time to and from activities	_____	_____
e. others (specify)	_____	_____
Total: Number of hours spent and number of people reached (add figures in both columns)	_____	_____

Section _____ Quarter _____ Year _____

[illegible]

35

Name_____

[illegible]

Telephone Contact Record

Dates Worked	Total Hours Spent
--------------	-------------------

Dates Worked	Total Hours Spent
--------------	-------------------

Dates Worked	Total Hours Spent
--------------	-------------------

Date	Name of caller	Telephone Number	If follow-up is needed, What?	Sex		White	Black	Hispanic	Native American	Asian
				M	F					
			Total People Helped							

Clientele Request Record
Master Volunteer

Date	Name: Master Volunteer	Request number	Name and Telephone Number of Each Fifth Request	Request Pertained to:	Problem or Question	Recommendations

Master Volunteer Contact Summary

Complete and Forward to:

Year_____

Name_____

County_____

[illegible]

Master Volunteer

Record -3k

Memorandum of Agreement

I have read the policies regarding my service as a (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer, and do hereby agree to provide (40) hours of service to Kansas State University as a (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer in return for the training provided by the K-State Research and Extension Service.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Supervising Extension Professional _____



MASTER

Volunteer

Section 4

Orientation and Training

MASTER *Volunteer*

Section 4: Orientation and Training

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Section 4 - Master Volunteer Orientation and Training (Master Volunteer Focused)

Goal: Multiply the delivery of K-State Research and Extension educational programs through trained (subject matter) Master Volunteers that reflect local and state policies and responsibilities.

Overview

Now that the need for a Master Volunteer has been established and information related to recruitment, selection, orientation and supervision has been reviewed, it is now time to train.

Many of the forms needed for training will be localized and developed by using the suggested forms in the three sections of the agent material.

Orientation Training Session

Included in first training session for (Subject Matter) Master Volunteer. (Allow approximately 20 minutes.)

- Orientation to K-State Research and Extension, review significant highlights of our state and county heritage from Section 1. Share what was discovered in the needs assessment and how it is connected to the use of (Subject Matter) Master Volunteers.
- Complete “Volunteer Functions Inventory” (Form 4a). Allow about 5 minutes. Keep on file for future reference.
- Review the local job responsibilities of the Master Volunteer. Encourage volunteers to think where their strongest assets are in relationship to the subject matter training and future job assignments as a Master Volunteer.

Continue with first subject matter orientation session.

Present Subject Matter Training Sessions

Final Training Session

- This training is offered as part of last training session for subject matter Master Volunteer. (Allow approximately 40 minutes.)
- Provide instruction in process and teaching skills “How Adults Learn.”
- Review local policy regarding work with youth in audience, issues of confidentiality, affirmative action and other policies and procedures as developed locally.
- Review VIP as appropriate and complete adult health forms.
- Overview of Master Volunteer responsibilities (there may be many different ones that will be assigned).
- Review upcoming training and staff meeting, give a calendar of when, where, time and requirement for recertification.
- Review forms that program will use for record keeping located in Section 3, and explain reimbursement process with overview of when and where they are due.

- Review Agreement (one signed and turned in to local office for records, copy kept by Master Volunteer), discuss supervision and performance evaluation form and procedure for resignation or dismissal.
- Tour the local facility they will be working in, and introduce them to the support staff of the local office. Review local policy on use of meeting rooms, AV resources, mailing and printing procedures.
- Celebrate by distributing Master Volunteer identification (official name badge, business cards, phone courtesy, folder, pencils).
- Announce next training or event they are expected to attend.

Volunteer Functions Inventory

Indicate how important or accurate each of the following reasons for volunteering are for you in doing volunteer work.

Using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all important/ accurate				Extremely important/ accurate		

- _____ 1. Volunteering can help me to get my foot in the door at a place where I would like to work.
- _____ 2. My friends volunteer.
- _____ 3. I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself.
- _____ 4. People I am close to want me to volunteer.
- _____ 5. Volunteering makes me feel important.
- _____ 6. People I know share an interest in community service.
- _____ 7. No matter how bad I have been feeling, volunteering helps me to forget about it.
- _____ 8. I am genuinely concerned about the particular group I am serving.
- _____ 9. By volunteering I feel less lonely.
- _____ 10. I can make new contacts that might help my business or career.
- _____ 11. Doing volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate than others.
- _____ 12. I can learn more about the cause for which I am working.
- _____ 13. Volunteering increases my self-esteem.
- _____ 14. Volunteering allows me to gain a new perspective on things.
- _____ 15. Volunteering allows me to explore different career options.
- _____ 16. I feel compassion towards people in need.
- _____ 17. Others with whom I am close place a high value on community service.
- _____ 18. Volunteering lets me learn things through direct, hands-on experience.
- _____ 19. I feel it is important to help others.
- _____ 20. Volunteering helps me work through my own personal problems.
- _____ 21. Volunteering will help me to succeed in my chosen profession.
- _____ 22. I can do something for a cause that is important to me.
- _____ 23. Volunteering is an important activity to the people I know best.
- _____ 24. Volunteering is a good escape from my own troubles.
- _____ 25. I can learn how to deal with a variety of people.
- _____ 26. Volunteering makes me feel needed.
- _____ 27. Volunteering makes me feel better about myself.
- _____ 28. Volunteering experience will look good on my resume.
- _____ 29. Volunteering is a way to make new friends.
- _____ 30. I can explore my own strengths.

Volunteer Functions Inventory Scoring

Values

Item Numbers	Your Score	Average (total/5)
3.		
8.		
16.		
19.		
22.		
Total		

Understanding

Item Numbers	Your Score	Average (total/5)
12.		
14.		
18.		
25.		
30.		
Total		

Social

Item Numbers	Your Score	Average (total/5)
2.		
4.		
6.		
17.		
23.		
Total		

Career

Item Numbers	Your Score	Average (total/5)
1.		
10.		
15.		
21.		
28.		
Total		

Protective

Item Numbers	Your Score	Average (total/5)
7.		
9.		
11.		
20.		
24.		
Total		

Enhancement

Item Numbers	Your Score	Average (total/5)
5.		
13.		
26.		
27.		
29.		
Total		

Volunteer Functions Inventory Interpretation

Score Interpretation: Average scores of 4.5 or higher reflect a strong influence of a particular motivation to volunteer.

Values

A function that may be served by involvement in volunteer service that centers on the opportunities that volunteerism provides for individuals to express values related to altruistic and humanitarian concerns.

Understanding

A function that may be served by involvement in volunteer service that involves the opportunity for volunteerism to permit new learning experiences and the chance to exercise knowledge, skills and abilities that might otherwise go unpracticed.

Social

A function that may be served by involvement in volunteer service that reflects motivations concerning relationships with others. Volunteering may offer opportunities to be with one's friends or to engage in an activity viewed as important by others.

Career

A function that may be served by involvement in volunteer service that is to protect the ego from negative features of the self — it may serve to reduce guilt over being more fortunate than others and to address one's own personal problems.

Enhancement

A function that may be served by involvement in volunteer service that centers on personal development, personal growth and higher self-esteem.

How Adults Learn

Teaching Adults

Adults are a challenge to teach. They are intelligent, inquisitive and usually highly motivated to learn. Adults want their learning to be problem-centered and personalized. A good teacher of adults is accepting of their need for self direction and personal responsibility and involvement in the learning process.

Many adults enjoy learning and are challenged by new ideas and information. They are lifelong learners who usually did well in school and are still comfortable as an adult in “school-like” situations. Other adults are not. Some have negative feelings about their school experiences and are uncomfortable being in the “dependent-learner” role. As a teacher of adults, you will see a wide range of differences in the adults you teach. A question adults frequently ask is “What is the fastest, easiest, and cheapest way for me to learn to...?” Attending your workshop or training session may be the very answer needed.

Adults are Unique

- They know a lot, from their many experiences.
- They have definite opinions, values and beliefs.
- They are highly time conscious.
- They learn by a variety of methods.
- They like to actively participate.
- They are seeking answers to current problems.
- They will not return if the training provided does not meet their needs.

For most adults, learning is a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. Adults who attend your training session do so because they have a current need for the knowledge or skills being taught.

Barriers to Learning

Resistance to change — if what you are teaching is in conflict with the belief system of the adult learner, they will resist “buying into” the concepts or ideas you are presenting. Unlike children, who come to school eager to learn and open to new ideas,

many adults have definite mind-sets that resist new ideas in all sizes and shapes. Helping an adult change is like dealing with a ice cube. First you help them melt the idea, then you reshape the idea, as in refreezing the water into another shape. Be sensitive to opposing viewpoints. There are many “right ways” to accomplish the same task. As a trainer of adults, you have an opportunity to continue to learn and grow, also. Encourage your learners to try new ideas and expand their horizons. Make learning an enjoyable experience, an opportunity to explore together, and to learn from each other in an accepting environment.

Negative Self-Image

People who feel good about themselves produce good work. This is true for adults and children. It is hard to learn when you are afraid to ask questions or feel your intellectual abilities are limited.

Be sensitive to put-downs. They have no place in your training session. As a teacher of adults, never use criticism or sarcasm to make a point.

What you will make, instead is an enemy — an adult learner who will not return to your training sessions. Strive to enhance the self-esteem of your participants. Simple ways to do this are:

- Learn their names.
- Respect their time — start and finish according to schedule.
- Be interested in their accomplishments.
- Acknowledge their contributions.
- Encourage their opinions and participation in class discussions and activities.

Fear of Failure

Adults, even more than kids, are sensitive to failure and looking foolish in front of their peers.

Although we are capable of learning new things at all ages of our lives, some adults feel insecure and will not participate so as not to look inadequate in a group situation.

Other adults participate frequently and use the group situation as a platform for their own performance. The key to being a successful teacher of adults is balance and control. The skilled teacher learns to balance the presentation of new material, debate and discussion, sharing of participants' ideas, and the clock.

A key to success is to be flexible when developing your teaching plans and methods. Always have a “Plan B” should you want to adjust your lesson to accommodate the needs of the group. Always be supportive of providing positive feedback and encouragement — and help your adult learners grow beyond their fear of failure.

Adults “vote with their feet.” If the training is meaningful and has application to their present concerns, they will return for the rest of the series. If not — you will have a “no-show” at your next training session.

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MASTER

Volunteer

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MASTER Volunteer

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